

VZCZCXRO1032

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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 061900Z NOV 06
FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7215
INFO RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO 3266
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 8522
RUEHRC/AMCONSUL RECIFE 5781
RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMIS DIP POSTS COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS BRASILIA 002325

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OES FOR LSPERLING; DGRIER; CDAWSON
FWS FOR JBIRCHELL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [TBIO](#) [ETRD](#) [KSCA](#) [BR](#)

SUBJECT: U.S.FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE PROVIDES TRAINING AGAINST
ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRAFFIC IN BRAZIL

¶1. Summary: A team of four officers from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), part of the U.S. Department of the Interior, provided Brazilian Federal Police with a training course to prevent and combat illegal wildlife trafficking over the two week period of October 16-27, 2006. The U.S Delegation was headed by special agent Jill Birchell and complemented by special agents Gary Young, Marty Hernandez and forensics scientist Dyan Straughan. The course, financed by the Narcotics Affairs Section at the Embassy, took place in Bonito located in the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso do Sul, one of the richest regions of the country in terms of Wildlife biodiversity. Both the United States and Brazilian Federal Police believe the exchange of information will help disrupt criminal organizations, in both countries, that profit from the illegal trade in wildlife. End Summary

¶2. The training focused on exchanging information on each country's national laws, international laws, surveillance, undercover operations, interviewing techniques and proactive methods of wildlife protection. This is the second joint training to take place; the first occurred in Brasilia from February 14-25, 2005. Brazilian and U.S. law enforcement agencies have exchanged information on these issues for many years. It is believed that in Brazil, as in most other countries of the world, traffickers in wildlife use the same network to deliver their goods to the United States as the drug traffickers. Worldwide trade in illegal species is estimated to be US\$ 10 billion and is believed to be the third most lucrative endeavor of organized crime, only surpassed by trafficking in drugs and weapons.

¶3. On Friday, October 13, 2006, a day before FWS team took off to Bonito, Forensics Scientist, Dyan Straughan attended an informal meeting requested by Brazil's Environmental Agency (IBAMA) in Brasilia. Five IBAMA representatives, from various divisions such as Fauna Affairs and Fishing Affairs Offices attended the meeting, along with a representative from the U.S. Embassy in Brasilia. Specialists were interested in many topics, especially forensics and law enforcement issues, including the use of forensics in fighting environmental crime. Since forensics is a very recent and unexplored issue in Brazil, IBAMA raised many questions about laboratories and infrastructure. Straughan gave an overview on the topic and was then invited to visit, at some point in the future, one of IBAMA's forensic laboratories currently under construction. During the meeting, IBAMA also highlighted some of its developing projects such as a genetic database for rare species. Throughout the discussion, both parties exchanged information on how they were dealing with specific crimes and illegal practices towards the environment.

¶4. During the training course in Bonito, the topics covered were case initiation and management, confidential informants, forensics,

surveillance, CITES, Lacey Act and other Federal laws, undercover operations, intelligence, smuggling, raid planning, interviewing and crime scene processing.

¶15. Marcus Luiz Barroso Barros, President of IBAMA, also participated as a lecturer during the course taking advantage of the fact that the "students" were the chiefs of the environmental law enforcement divisions for each state in Brazil. Neiva Guedes, coordinator of the Blue Macaw Project, delivered a two-hour presentation on how the project is slowly increasing the numbers of one of the rarest species of macaw in the world.

¶16. In addition to Barros and Guedes, other guests included Zulmar Pimentel Dos Santos, Executive Director of the Brazilian Federal Police (BFP), Mrio Jos De Oliveira Santos, Federal Police Superintendent for the State of Mato Grosso do Sul, and Valmir Gabriel Ortega, Head of IBAMA's Ecosystem Office.

¶17. Both print media and television networks positively covered the October 13 press conference as well as training in Bonito.

¶18. Comment: Cooperation between the Brazilian Federal Police and FWS actually began 10 years ago and over the ensuring period their exchange of intelligence has led to convictions in both Brazil and the State of Florida. It has proven to be a workable model in meeting law enforcement and environmental protection goals in both countries. Nevertheless, the problem of wildlife trafficking is still serious in Brazil. This training conference was another important step forward in improving Brazil's law enforcement capacity in this area. The Embassy will continue to work with FWS and the Federal Police to coordinate additional exchanges of best practices, follow-up visits, and training. End Comment

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